

Mohegan Nation

The Mohegan Tribe is a sovereign, federally recognized Indian Nation with a reservation on the Thames River near Uncasville, Connecticut. The town of Uncasville is named after our Sachem Uncas, a seventeenth century Chief. Like Uncas, we have been committed to good relations with our non-Indian neighbors. The Tribe exercises full civil jurisdiction and concurrent criminal jurisdiction over our lands. Our Tribe is governed by a Tribal Constitution which empowers a nine member Tribal Council to serve as the legislative and executive branch, and a seven member Council of Elders which is responsible for judicial oversight and cultural integrity. We maintain traditional titles including Chief, Medicine Woman, and Pipe Carrier.

Federal Recognition

The sovereignty of the Mohegans was recognized by the Connecticut Colony in the Treaty of 1638, and that state recognition is maintained to this day. In 1978, the U.S. Government created a process through which the tribes could petition for federal acknowledgment. The Mohegan Nation was formally recognized on March 7, 1994. On September 30, 1995, 240 acres of the northernmost traditional Mohegan reservation lands were reacquired by the Tribe and placed in trust by the United States government. Our Mohegan Reservation is located on the western bank of the Thames River, adjacent to the village of Uncasville in the town of Montville, Connecticut.

Programs and Accomplishments

Even before the beginning of our Mohegan Sun gaming complex, the Tribe has been dedicated to treading lightly on the earth. This ethic has been an over reaching rule governing every thing we do. With the completion of the gaming facility, several new directions became apparent. Every one of the casino's more than 6,000 employees received environmental health and safety training, helping them recognize the issues we saw as important, and the reasons behind those rules. A comprehensive recycling program was implemented, that not only recycles all paper and plastic from the gaming facility, it also recovers all food scraps, which are then used as animal fodder for our pig farm, and the pigs are used as food in our restaurants. Also, waste fat, oil and grease was originally used to produce animal fodder, but is now used to produce bio-diesel fuel to power our fleet of busses which move visitors from the parking areas to the gaming facility. Completion of a 30-story hotel has added another 3,000 employees and additional recycling opportunities.

The Tribe has begun an aggressive campaign of developing fuel cells to replace standby diesel generators as sources of emergency standby power for the facility. Eventually, when more fuel cells are brought on line, we hope to use them as a main power source, and use the grid as standby power. We recently opened our tribal health service facility and a visionary environmental education center. These facilities make extensive use of solar power (both passive and PVC) and ground-source heat pumps to make them energy independent. Computer systems orient the solar array for optimum efficiency during daylight, and storage cells provide backup for cloudy days.

In 2001, the Tribe submitted our application for the nation's first Tribal Implementation Plan which will make the Tribe fully responsible for administering and enforcing elements of the Clean Air Program. EPA New England is in the final stages of reviewing this proposal.

The Mohegan Nation looks forward to further development with the cooperation of EPA New England.